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Newsletter

June 2020



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring has finally sprung, which means boat lifts are going in, lines are being cast and even some water sports have started (brrrr!). We welcome you all back to the lake after another long and cold winter! LEPA was very busy throughout 2019 and early into 2020 holding family activities and continuing discussions with Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) about the water quality and weed growth. A new water sampling program was started late last year, and will continue on into 2020. This will allow us to get a good baseline on the water quality in the lake during a high lake level year. I know we are all looking forward to another good year with our water quality.

We continued to make improvements to the LEPA education and adventure center in 2019. Tables and signage boards were installed; landscaping, new washroom facilities and bat houses were put up! Come by and have a walk around to learn more about the lake. We held our annual boat regatta in July with a Canada day theme. The regatta once again turned into a giant water fight and as always was a lot of fun! Thank you to all who decorated their boats and participated in our tour around the lake. We had a great showing at the picnic afterwards, which included face painting and a bounce house for the kids. It was a great time held by all!

In September we held our silent auction, which was another huge success! We raised over \$8,750 and had a great time doing it. Thank you to all who donated the items, the volunteers who helped run the event and to everyone who brought the delicious food. 2019 was a great summer, but we can't forget our first annual fishing derby that occurred in February 2020! We had over 80 people participate and raised over \$2,600. Thank you to all who donated the amazing prizes. It was a chilly day, but we had a great turn out and we hope you all had fun even if you did get skunked! We will be increasing our advertising around this event next year and look to improve on last year's success.

We hope you enjoy this summer, even if it looks and feels a bit different with what is happening around the world. COVID-19 has had an impact on our daily lives, but the lake is always a great place to escape and have some fun! Our annual general meeting has been postponed indefinitely with the restrictions that have been put on the province. We are hoping to still hold a few of our planned events this summer including the boat regatta and boat rally as long as we can meet the Alberta Health Services requirements. Keep an eye out for more information, as COVID-19 restrictions have been changing daily.

Stay safe and have a great summer!
Rod Kause, President

AGM News from the President

Update on our Annual General Meeting

This years AGM is postponed indefinitely due to the COVID-19 restrictions placed on the province. Last year we held our AGM on June 15, 2019 at the Rich Valley Community Hall. This was the first year we had this event at this venue and the attendance of our members was very poor. We are not sure if we had adequate advertising for our AGM or if the new location posed a challenge, but we will take this into consideration when we schedule our meeting next year. At our 2019 meeting we heard from Nature Alberta about our shoreline assessment data that was collected and we were also updated on our fish populations by Alberta Environment and Parks. With no elections possible, all existing board members have agreed remain for the interim year, the LEPA Board will remain unchanged for 2020. We have 6 vacancies on the board so if you are interested please reach out to any of the directors or send us an email. We are also always interested if you just simply want to volunteer to help out with activities and projects around the lake.

We look forward to our 2021 AGM.

Sincerely,

First Annual Fishing Derby



LEPA hosted its first fishing derby on a chilly Feb 16 this year and it was a huge success! We had 80 fisher people out on the lake catching and safely releasing both pike and perch in a friendly family fishing event. Many fish were caught and a few folks were skunked but there was a lot of fun had by all. We fished for 4 hours and participants put their names in draw boxes for a chance to win some great prizes. We also had a ticket raffle for a number of other donated items. Overall we were able to raise \$2,600 to support LEPA's ongoing initiatives. Thanks once again to all those that donated items to support the event. We look forward to growing the event next year!

The Effects of Dumping Goldfish & Other Invasive Fish

What do you do with Bubbles, the pet goldfish, when the kids lose interest and no longer want him? Can you put Bubbles in the lake or the storm drain? The short answer is no. If you dump your fish into the storm drain, the fish will eventually get into our rivers and lakes through flooding and heavy rain. Nicole Kimmel, Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist said; Goldfish compete with native species for food and habitat and can introduce diseases and parasites, all of which can reduce biodiversity. They also stir up sediments and nutrients, clouding the water and causing more algae and plant growth. Facing no natural predators in this province, goldfish can grow exceptionally large. Nicole has seen goldfish grow to the size of dinner plates. These fish eat everything in sight and are aggressive and competitive to the natural habitat.

What is an invasive species? This occurs when a non-native species has been introduced, intentionally or unintentionally, from other countries or ecosystems. The invasive species threatens the natural biodiversity of Alberta's ecosystems. Other types of invasive species such as Koi, Carp, and Rosie Red Minnows can devastate the delicate balance of Alberta's aquatic ecosystems, by preying on native fish species and competing with them for food.

According to Nicole, there are over 50 locations around Alberta that are infested with large numbers of goldfish. They have three spawning events per year, which makes for a rapid growth rate of goldfish. For example, places as close as St Albert have caught 45,000 goldfish in their storm ponds in the last couple of years.

Nicole also said the government has a program in place called the "Don't Let it Loose" campaign, which focuses on educating Albertans about the dangers of releasing domestic fish into nature.

Here is the link, which has quick facts and more information about the campaign: <https://www.alberta.ca/dont-let-it-loose-campaign.aspx>

IMAGES OF GOLDFISH THAT HAVE BEEN RELEASED INTO LAKE ECOSYSTEMS



What can you do with your goldfish or Koi if you no longer want them? First, call the local pet store, they may take the fish off your hands or post on social media, and let another family enjoy the goldfish.

As well, if the goldfish has died please do not flush the remains. This is still harmful to the ecosystem as the fish may carry disease that can get into our rivers and lake systems. Burying the fish is the safest option, and also provides fertilization for your yard.

Why Are Weeds Growing in Lac La Nonne?

Excess weeds in our lake can look unattractive, but they can also signify a more significant problem — eutrophication. Eutrophication takes place when a pond or lake is overloaded with nutrients like phosphates and nitrates, which leads to increased biological productivity. These nutrients are often introduced into the water by human activities like synthetic fertilizer use, sewage leaks and erosion of the surrounding area.

Weeds and algae feed on these extra nutrients, leading to unattractive weed growth in your pond. As these weeds and algae take up the available oxygen, fish habitats can start to die off. The fish are then left without a home, and many are unable to see predators or food sources due to the lack of visibility. If the problem isn't taken care of, you could lose entire species from your lake as they continue to die off. Further, heavy weeds can lead to unsafe swimming conditions that could put your residents or guests at risk.

When you notice excess weeds and other growth this year, this should be a daily reminder to reduce YOUR OWN PERSONAL AFFECT ON THE LAKE by reducing the nutrient loading in Lac La Nonne. These steps might include:

- ❖ Use non-phosphorus fertilizer on the grass at your recreational property OR BETTER YET, do not use any fertilizer at all
- ❖ Sweep all your grass clippings from lawnmowers and weed trimmers away from your lake or collect in a bag and put in composting area away from the lake. Follow this practice to avoid blowing the surrounding grass into Lac La Nonne.
- ❖ Make sure all family members and lake guests follow proper trash cleanup procedures. Provide plenty of trashcans around your property and enforce strict regulations on littering and pet waste.

Shoreline Erosion Protection

Waterfront landowners have a common-law right to protect their land from erosion. They may construct erosion protection features up to the natural boundary of their property. Approval from the Crown is required to construct these works if they disturb the natural boundary, bank or the bed of the water body.

Some sites will need a structurally engineered solution to erosion. The design should consider:

- ❖ the erosion potential of the shore and bank
- ❖ the expected wave environment for the site

Many other sites can reduce land erosion by:

- ❖ allowing native vegetation to regrow
- ❖ planting vegetation to add structural stability

To determine the erosion potential of a site, see:

- ❖ [Lakeshore erosion potential calculator](#)
 - <https://extranet.gov.ab.ca/env/lakeshore-erosion-potential-calculator/default.aspx>
- ❖ [Worksheet to calculate lakeshore erosion potential](#)
 - <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/ep-calculate-lakeshore-erosion-worksheet.pdf>

Erosion Potential (EP) Scores and Categories:

<u>EP Score</u>	<u>Erosion Potential</u>	<u>Erosion Control</u>
0-20	Low	Allow natural regeneration to occur. Allow emergent vegetation to re-grow. Scores at upper end of range, use bio-engineering techniques.
20-35	Medium	Use bio-engineering and armouring to control erosion. Requires engineering design and review.
35 +	High	Use engineered solution. Requires engineering design and review.

EVENTS

July 11th – Boat Regatta

- ❖ Meet @ Mission Boat Launch at 11 am. There will be no picnic following the regatta to follow social distancing protocols.

August 15th – Wet and Wild Boat Rally

- ❖ Meet @ LEPA Education Centre at Klondike Park for registration and lake map of stops. This event will occur subject to COVID restrictions.

www.lepa-ab.com

www.instagram.com/lepa.ab

www.facebook.com/Lac-La-Nonne



Why Should I Become a LEPA Member?

- ❖ It only costs \$20 per family – purchase on the LEPA website. *A draw for a giftcard will be made at the Regatta from all people buying their memberships on the website*
- ❖ To protect and preserve this lake
- ❖ Become an advocate for clean water
- ❖ Be pro-active
- ❖ To protect your lake lot investment
- ❖ Help restore the fish stocks in the lake
- ❖ **THIS IS YOUR LAKE!** Leave it to your children and grandchildren in better shape than you received it
- ❖ Conservation and preservation is contagious! Catch it today
- ❖ An excellent opportunity to meet new friends around the lake all with the same goals!